

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please add the following wording to the last paragraph on page 9:

It will be appreciated that components other than IC package 102 may be attached to PCB 104 for either diagnostic or other purposes such as for the application of electrical power and remain within the scope of the present invention. It will be further appreciated that a number of different diagnostic operations may be conducted including but not limited to: analog electrical testing, digital communication, thermal testing, and mechanical vibration testing, and that all such variations are included within the scope of the present invention.

Please add the following wording to the first paragraph on page 13 to read as follows:

In a preferred embodiment, a plurality of vias 405 extend through PCB 104 enabling electrical contact (and optionally, thermal contact) to be established between IC package 102 or other component, and diagnostic or other equipment disposed above the upper surface of PCB 104. In the cutaway view of FIGURE 4, a plurality of vias 405 are depicted, the majority of which remain accessible to diagnostic equipment (not shown), accessible to a supply of electrical power for IC package of 102, or any other suitable use for vias 405 even after contact between base 406 and PCB 104 is firmly established. The inventive test fixture thereby presents the advantage of being able to access electrical contact with the IC package 102 and simultaneously provide for straightening of PCB 104. As for the base discussed in connection with FIGURE 2, the shape of base 406 is variable and has a size which preferably represents a compromise between two competing considerations, the first of which is to minimize the number of vias and other points of interest on the upper surface of PCB 104 which are obstructed by base 406, and the second of which is to avoid applying excessive pressure (measured in force per unit of area) to any portion of PCB 104. Generally, the first consideration listed above operates to encourage reducing the size of base 406 while the second consideration operates to encourage increasing the size of base 406. A range of base dimensions may be selected which substantially satisfy both of the above considerations. Although base 406 is preferably made of Aluminum, a range of other metallic and non-metallic materials may be employed, and all such variations are within the scope of the present invention.

Please replace paragraph beginning at page 11, line 24, with the following rewritten paragraph:

In the embodiment of FIGURE 3, an alternative deployment of link extensions is presented which may either used alone or interchangeably with link extension 205 depicted in FIGURE 2. In the alternative embodiment of FIGURE 3, compression mechanism 204 applies force to two link attachments 301, which in turn apply force to PCB 104 to substantially straighten PCB 104. Preferably, the bases 302 of link attachments 301 are positioned and dimensioned such that a region covered by base 206 of FIGURE 2 is uncovered and accessible to diagnostic or other equipment when employing the link extension embodiment depicted in FIGURE 3. In this manner, the use of link extension 205 (FIGURE 2) and link extension assembly 303 in successive stages of operation of the inventive fixture, for straightening of PCB 104, preferably operates to provide access to an entirety of a region of interest 304 (FIGURES 2-4) of the upper surface of PCB 104. Operation as described above could be achieved by successively attaching link 205 and then link extension assembly 303 to the same compression mechanism 204. Alternatively, a succession of frames 201 having equipment attached to them as depicted in FIGURES 2 and 3 respectively, could be attached successively to the same location on PCB 104.

Please replace paragraph beginning at page 14, line 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

--Although one particular embodiment of the inventive test fixture is depicted in FIGURE 4, numerous variations will be apparent to those of skill in the art. The number of bases 406 employed to apply force to the upper layer of PCB 104 is not limited to one, but may be varied to suit the needs of a particular application. Any number of bases 406 could be employed. The provision of a plurality of bases 406 may be accomplished by attaching a plurality of coil spring or other link extension mechanisms to screw 402 with each such coil spring attached to a base 406. Alternatively or additionally, a plate may be attached to the bottom end of one or more coil springs 403 to which a plurality of links terminating in bases 406 may be attached, thereby employing a single coil spring to apply force through a plurality of bases.